Bumper Maize Crop in Karnataka

2754. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that bumper maize crop in Karnataka this year has posed a storage problem in the State; if so, what is the quantum of maize production in the State *vis-a-vis* the storage capacity;

(b) whether the State Government has sought permission for its export; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken to tackle the problem of glut in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on Table of the House.

Excess production of jowar and potato in North Karnataka

2755. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is excess production of jowar and potato in North Karnataka and the farmers are not getting remunerative prices; and

(b) if so, what assistance is provided by the Central Government to the State Government to help the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The production estimates of agricultural commodities are worked out on State-wise basis and not on region-basis. The production of jowar has increased from 1.64 million tonnes in 1998-99 to 1.85 million tonnes in 1999-2000 in Karnataka. Similarly, the production of potatoes has increased from 4.22 lakh tonnes in 1998-99 to 4.60 lakh tonnes in 1999-2000.

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is the central designated nodal agency for procurement of coarse cereals (including jowar) and intervenes in the market if the market prices of the Fair Average Quality rule below the minimum support prices (MSPs) fixed by the Government.

During the year 2000-2001, Government of Karnataka procured following quantity of potato through Karnataka State Cooperative Marketing Federation under State sponsored Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) 117 Rs. 360 per quintal:

(i) Quantity procured: 115183.20 qtls.

(ii) Area of Operation: Dharwad, Belgaum and Kolar.

(iii) Period of Operation of the Scheme: November 2000 to January 2001.

NAFED provided marketing support to the State Government for arranging disposal of procured stock of potato under MIS through the network of its branches.

Post harvest loss of horticulture produce

2756. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large quantity of horticulture produce gets damaged and lost due to delays after harvesting and damage in transport and storage;

(b) if so, the magnitude of such losses; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to reduce these losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Although no scientific study has been carried out to assess the post harvest handling losses of horticulture produce, the Working Group on horticulture development for Tenth Five Year Plan has reported the losses of 20 to 40 percent at different stages of grading, packing, storage, transport and finally marketing. Losses also depend upon cultivars and season of harvesting.

(c) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing programmes, for reduction of post harvest losses, through the National Horticulture Board (NHB) which include:—

(i) Development of Commercial Horticulture through Post-Harvest Management; and

(ii) Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme for Construction/Expansion/ Modernisation of Cold Storage and Storages for Horticulture Produce.